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## **GOVERNOR BEEBE RELEASES FUNDS FOR MENTAL HEALTH CARE BEDS**

**LITTLE ROCK** – Governor Mike Beebe today released \$1.6 million in General Improvement Funds to finance new mental-health beds in Arkansas hospitals. Nearly all the money will go toward establishing beds in Northwest Arkansas. Legislative GIF disbursements will also contribute toward the new beds.

“Reforming our mental-health-care system requires more options for quality care and these beds create new options in a rapidly growing part of our state,” Beebe said. “Northwest Arkansas has long needed more local facilities for mental-health treatment, and with the help of legislators and health-care providers, we’re now able to put additional beds in Springdale and Booneville.”

“This is a giant step for mental-health care in Northwest Arkansas,” DHS Behavioral Health Services Director Jay Bradford said. “Opening up access to acute care combined with our efforts to improve community-based services is a critical component of having a System of Care for families.”

Over one-million dollars from Governor Beebe’s GIF allotment and nearly \$600,000 from the legislature will go toward the establishment of a 29-bed, inpatient mental-health unit at Northwest Medical Center in Springdale. Northwest Health System will operate the facility along with the UAMS Psychiatric Research Institute and Ozark Guidance Center.

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In Booneville, work is being done toward renovating the old Booneville Community Hospital into a 25-bed psychiatric, inpatient facility. Governor Beebe is releasing more than \$500,000 for that project, and the legislature will add nearly \$300,000.

Governor Beebe and legislators also have designated a combined \$80,000 to renovate the Crisis Unit at the Little Rock Community Mental Health Center.

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